

Fream's Andaman Club completes front nine

By ANDREW OVERBECK

THAHTAY KHUN ISLAND, Myanmar — Precipitation, and large amounts of it, have dictated the construction schedule of the 18-hole Fream and Dale Golfplan-designed course here at the Andaman Club in southern Myanmar. It is fitting, then, that the first nine holes will open

in November, following this year's rainy season.

"Last year between June and November we had over 15 feet of rain and that created certain construction problems," said Fream. "I don't get any easy jobs and we have been working three years to get these nine holes done."

According to Fream, working

between the rainy seasons stretches out the construction schedule because "you have to do everything and get the grass up before the rains come—or else you lose it all."

Rainfall was not the only factor that impacted Fream's design. Construction of the course has been undertaken using local



The green site on the 320-meter, par-4 second at the Andaman Club



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labor and basic methods.

"We didn't do what we would do in California or Tennessee as far as golf design," said Fream. "It is a nice course and the site is magnificent and the golf is going to be good. But it isn't overly extravagant because we are doing most of the work by hand. We have to do things that are practical in circumstance and then the course must be maintainable mostly by walk-behind equipment."

The construction employed between 125 and 150 local laborers, who did everything from sand capping the fairways to blasting through rock by hand.

"This isn't a high-tech operation," said Fream. "You do it the way you can get it done. It isn't practical to bring in high-priced equipment and put people out of work."

While the construction methods may not be high-tech, the results are certainly up to par. The course is set on undulating terrain, features views of the Andaman Sea and is surrounded by jungle vegetation.

"It is a unique site," he said, "with the massive trees, elevation change and views off in the horizon of smaller islands."

The highlight of the front nine is the 170-meter par-3 third hole which features a 75-foot drop from tee to green, eight different teeing positions and views of Thailand and Myanmar.

All 18 holes of the course are due to open in summer 2001. However, the resort hotel, which is popular with vacationing Thais, is expanding and Fream has been asked to put in another nine holes. "We may be here another three years," he said.

JOHNSTON TO DESIGN BLACKWATER

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. — Clyde Johnston has been retained to design an 18-hole semi-private course at Blackwater, a 600-acre community in Santee, S.C.

The 6,800-yard, par-72 course will be called Blackwater Golf and Fish Club. The three finishing holes of the course will be framed by the shoreline of Lake Marion, the largest lake in South Carolina. Completion of the course is expected in the fall of 2001.